

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2965

INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

S E C R E T PEKING 2282

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CH US

SUBJECT: SENATOR MANSFIELD'S MEETING WITH CHOU EN-LAI

1. SENATOR MANSFIELD, ACCOMPANIED BY MRS. MANSFIELD, HAD 55-MINUTE MEETING WITH CHOU EN-LAI EVENING OF DEC 12. SENATOR MANSFIELD HAD ASKED BEFOREHAND HOW LONG MEETING SHOULD LAST AND WAS TOLD ABOUT 10 TO 15 MINUTES; HE HAD THEN ASKED CHINESE TO LET HIM KNOW DURING SESSION WHEN HE SHOULD BREAK OFF. LENGTH OF MEETING HAD BOTH SURPRISED AND PLEASED HIM.

2. ACCORDING TO SENATOR MANSFIELD, CHOU EN-LAI APPEARED TO BE IN QUITE GOOD PHYSICAL CONDITION. CHOU LOOKED THIN, BUT NO MORE SO THAN AT MANSFIELD'S LAST MEETING WITH HIM IN 1972. CHOU'S MIND WAS ALSO VERY CLEAR. THE TWO REMINISCED ABOUT THEIR WARTIME EXPERIENCES IN 1944-45 AT TIME WHEN SENATOR MANSFIELD, THEN A REPRESENTATIVE, HAD BEEN SENT ON SPECIAL MISSION TO CHUNGKING BY PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT. CHOU HAD BEEN OUT OF CHUNGKING IN YUNNAN PROVINCE DURING THAT PERIOD, BUT THEY SPOKE OF MUTUAL ACQUAINTANCES.

3. NO MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE WERE DISCUSSED. WHEN SENATOR MANSFIELD ASKED CHOU IF THERE WERE ANY PROBLEMS

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IN US-PRC RELATIONS, CHOU REFERRED THE SENATOR TO

FOREIGN MINISTER CHIAO KUAN-HUA FOR TALKS ON ANY SUCH QUESTIONS. SENATOR MANSFIELD HAD IMPRESSION FROM THIS THAT CHOU WANTED TO STEP BACK FROM DAY-TO-DAY MATTERS AND LEAVE THEM IN THE HANDS OF OTHERS.

4. SENATOR MANSFIELD HAD NO IDEA WHERE MEETING TOOK PLACE. IT WAS ALREADY DARK WHEN HE CALLED ON CHOU, AND BEING UNFAMILIAR WITH PEKING HE COULD NOT SAY WHERE HE WAS TAKEN. ALTHOUGH NCNA DESCRIBED MEETING AS TAKING PLACE IN A HOSPITAL, SENATOR MANSFIELD MENTIONED THAT THERE WAS RED CARPETING INSIDE MAIN ENTRANCE AND BEFORE DOOR TO CHOU'S ROOM, SUGGESTING SOME KIND OF SPECIAL QUARTERS. HOLDRIDGE

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